

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 2, replace the section of line 1 as follows.

-- ~~[DESCRIPTION]~~

This application claims priority to U.S. provisional patent application no. 60/179,172
filed on January 31, 2000. --

Page 2, replace the section of lines 17-18 as follows.

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One such method is described in the international patent application WO-A-99/24933, herein
incorporated by reference in its entirety for background information only. This document
relates to the merging of compressed

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